

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of managing a plurality of active devices, wherein the active devices include a management port which is connected to a management port of a concentrator device and a communication port of the concentrator device is connected to a communication port of a computer, the method comprising the steps of:

selecting the active device to manage;  
establishing a link between the communication port of the concentrator device and the management port of the concentrator device associated with the selected active device; and  
communicating with the selected active device from the computer.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein selecting the active devices to manage comprises:

manually activating a switch associated with the management port with which the desired active device is connected.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein selecting the active devices to manage comprises:

selecting the desired active device through a user interface on the computer; and

sending a signal to the concentrator device indicating the selected active device.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

receiving a signal to operate the concentrator device in simultaneous mode; and

establishing a simultaneous link between the communications port of the concentrator device and each of the selected management ports of the concentrator device.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein selecting the active device to manage comprises:
  - manually activating a switch associated with the simultaneous mode.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of management ports support the same protocol.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein the communication port of the concentrator device and the plurality of management ports support different protocols.
8. An apparatus for managing multiple active devices, the apparatus comprising:
  - at least one communication port;
  - a plurality of management ports;
  - a plurality of switches; and
  - a microprocessor configured to establish a link between the communication port and at least one selected management port.
9. The device of claim 8, wherein the microprocessor is configured to receive an external signal indicating the selected management port.
10. The device of claim 8, wherein the microprocessor is configured to receive an internal signal indicating the selected management port, wherein the internal signal is generated based on the activation of one of said plurality of switches.
11. The device of claim 8, wherein the microprocessor is configured to establish a simultaneous link between the communication port and two or more of the plurality of management ports.

12. The device of claim 8, wherein the plurality of management ports support the same protocol.

13. The device of claim 12, wherein the communication port and the plurality of management ports support different protocols.

14. A system for managing a plurality of active devices, the system comprising:

- a plurality of active devices;

- a concentrator device, the concentrator device comprising at least one communication port, a plurality of management ports, and a microprocessor, wherein the microprocessor is configured to:

  - receive an external signal indicating a selected active device; and

  - establish a link between the communication port and the management port associated with the selected active device;

- a computer, the computer comprising a user interface configured to:

  - receive an indication of the active device to be managed; and

  - send a signal to the concentrator device indicating the active device selected to be managed; and

  - wherein each of the plurality of active devices are connected to a management port of the concentrator device and a communication port of the concentrator device is connected to a communication port of the computer.

15. A computer readable medium comprising executable code, the executable code configured to:

- send signals to a concentrator device;

- receive signals from the concentrator device;

- receive an indication of one or more active devices to be managed;

and

- wherein at least one of the signals sent to the concentrator device indicates one or more active devices to be managed.

16. The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein at least one of the signals received from the concentrator device provided information regarding establishment of a link between a communication port and a manage port of the concentrator device.

17. The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein at least one of the signals received from the concentrator device initiated in one of a plurality of active devices connected to the concentrator device.

18. The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein at least one of the signals sent to the concentrator device is passed to one or more of a plurality of active devices connected to the concentrator device.